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VZCZCMAY560ILN176 ~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ ZYUW
MULT 34120
ACTION
DIA:
DISTR
CJCS DJS J3(14) J5(02) J3:NMCC SECDEF(07) SECDEF:
ASD:ISA(10) :DIA(15) NMIC
CMC WASHINGTON DC
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NSA WASH DC
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~~NOFORN~~

TRANSIT/281630Z/282014Z/003:44TOR3011953
DE RUESBAA #0545 3011900
ZNY ~~CCCCC~~
P 2816307 OCT 77
FM (b)(3):10 USC 424
TO RUEKJCS/DIA WASH DC
INFO RULPALJ/USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ
RULBSAA/USNAVSTA RODMAN CZ
RUEBARA/COMNAVINTCOM ALEX VA
RULYVGA/USCOMSOLANT
BT
~~C O N F I D E N T I A L/NOFORN~~ 0545 OCT 77
SUBJ: THIS IS IR (b)(3):10 USC 424
1. ARGENTINA (AR)
2. (b)(3):10 USC 424
3. (U) MILITARY AFFAIRS - CAPTURE OF FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS
4M N/A
5. 770921 - 771001
6. 771026
7. 7U1025, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA
8. (b)(3):10 USC 424
9.
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13. (b)(3):10 USC 424

14.

15. DIRC: NO. ~~NOFORN TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT TO HOST GOVT.~~

16. SUMMARY: ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Sec. 3.3(b) (1) SOURCE REPORTS INFORMATION REGARDING THE CAPTURE OF FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS BY THE ARGENTINE NAVY (ARGNAV).

Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

22. DETAILS: 1. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ SOURCE Sec. 3.3(b) (1) DESCRIBED SPECIFIC DETAILS THAT OCCURRED DURING THE CAPTURE OF RUSSIAN AND BULGARIAN FISHING TRAWLERS ALLEGED TO BE WITHIN ARGENTINE TERRITORIAL WATERS (SEE IR (b)(3):10 USC 42 (b)(3):10 USC 424;Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

2. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ ON THE AFTERNOON OF 21 SEP ARA, "PY" ENCOUNTERED 2 GROUPS OF THREE FISHING VESSELS EACH, SAILING IN COMPANY. Sec. 3.3(b) (1) THEIR COURSE WAS EASTERLY AT ABOUT 10-12 KNOTS. AT THE TIME OF ENCOUNTER THEY WERE ALL NEAR, BUT WITHIN, THE 200 MILE LIMIT ACCORDING TO THE BRIDGE CHART. ALL OF THE FISHING VESSELS IGNORED COMMUNICATIONS ATTEMPTS BY ARA "PY". SIGNALS WERE SENT BY FLASHING LIGHT AND BRIDGE-TO-BRIDGE UHF RADIO FROM A RANGE OF ABOUT 4000 YARDS. THE "PY'S" COMMUNICATIONS WERE ALL OF THE NATURE OF ORDERS TO STOP ENGINES AND OF THREATS TO SHOOT IF NECESSARY. THE ARA "PY" FIRED 2 OR 3 SHELLS ACROSS THE BOW OF ONE VESSEL (UNKNOWN NAME) WHICH STOPPED BUT SHORTLY THEREAFTER RETURNED TO HER FORMER COURSE AND SPEED AS "PY/ TRIED TO MANEUVER TO TAKE POSITION ON THE RUSSIAN TRAWLER "MAGNIT" SO AS TO BE IN A SAFE FIRING POSITION. THE COMMODORE OF DESTROYER DIVISION I AND CO OF "PY" ELECTED TO PICK AND DETAIN ONE VESSEL INSTEAD OF ALL THREE. THIS SHIP WAS THE "MAGNIT" WHICH READILY STOPPED HER ENGINES AFTER ONE ROUND ACROSS THE BOW WAS FIRED AT A RANGE OF ABOUT 1000 YARDS. IMMEDIATELY, THE "MAGNIT" BEGAN TO SIGNAL VIA THE BRIDGE-TO-BRIDGE UHF CIRCUIT IN FAIRLY GOOD ENGLISH. HER SIGNALS WERE QUESTIONS ABOUT WHY SHE WAS ARRESTED (REPLY BY ARGENTINES "YOU KNOW WHY") AND WHERE THEIR DESTINATION WAS TO BE AFTER SHE WAS ORDERED TO CHANGE COURSE.

Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

THE "MAGNIT" WAS ORDERED TO TAKE A COURSE TO PUERTO MADRYN. "PY" FOLLOWED ASTERN OF HER AT 2000 YARDS. THE "MAGNIT" SUBSEQUENTLY ARRIVED IN THE PUERTO MADRYN AND WAS DETAINED ALONG WITH OTHER CAPTURED SHIPS.

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3. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ THE CAPTURE OF THE BULGARIAN TRAWLER "OFELIA" ON 1 OCT 77 WAS MORE DIFFICULT. A TOTAL OF 23 FIVE INCH ROUNDS WERE EXPENDED BY THE PY. RANGE OF THE 23 ROUNDS, VARIED BETWEEN 1500 AND 2000 YARDS. 19 WERE FIRED AHEAD OF THE SHIP AND WERE GRADUALLY WALKED BACK TO "OFELIA." "OFELIA" WAS THEN HIT BY FOUR INERT ROUNDS. TWICE BEFORE THE FIRST ROUND HIT, ROUNDS WERE FIRED SO CLOSE TO THE BOW OF "OFELIA" THAT WATER SPLASHED ONTO HER BRIDGE WINDOWS. CONSTANT WARNING SIGNALS BY RADIO AND LIGHT WERE MADE FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS DURING THE ACTION. "OFELIA" MAINTAINED AN EASTERLY COURSE AT 15KTS THE ENTIRE TIME. THE FIRST ROUND THAT IMPACTED TOOK OUT A PIECE OF THE SILHOUETTE OF THE STEM OF THE SHIP. A CEASE FIRE WAS ORDERED AND THEN COMMENCE FIRE WAS REDIRECTED AFTER THE RECEIPT OF AN ORDER FROM ADM MASSERA TO SINK THE SHIP AND RESCUE SURVIVORS. THIS OCCURRED AT ABOUT 0500 HOURS. THE NEXT ROUND HIT JUST BELOW THE BRIDGE CAUSING INJURY TO ONE CREWMAN SLEEPING IN A STATEROOM; THE LAST TWO ROUNDS ENTERED AMIDSHIPS JUST ABOVE THE WATERLINE, AND SHORTLY THEREAFTER "OFELIA" SENT HER FIRST SIGNAL BY FLASHING LIGHT AND INFORMED "PY" THAT SHE HAD A FIRE ABOARD. THESE ROUNDS HAD APPARENTLY ENTERED MACHINERY SPACES. "OFELIA" EFFECTED ENGINE REPAIRS AND AT THE SAME TIME TRANSFERRED THE WOUNDED CREWMAN ALONG WITH THEIR SHIP'S DOCTOR TO "PY" VIA BOAT. WITHIN TWO HOURS THE PRIZE CREW WAS ABOARD "OFELIA". THE SHIP WAS ABLE TO MAKE HER MAXIMUM SPEED OF 15KTS AND PROCEEDED TOWARD PUERTO MADRYN. Sec. 3.3 (b) (1)

SOURCE STATED THAT THE "OFELIA" WAS ENCOUNTERED AT ABOUT 190 MILES FROM THE ARGENTINE COAST. WHEN APPREHENDED AFTER CONSTANT PURSUIT ALONGSIDE, SHE WAS OUTSIDE ARGENTINE WATERS BY A VERY ROUGH ESTIMATE OF 40-60 MILES. THE OFFICER OF THE PRIZE CREW SENT TO BOARD "OFELIA" TOLD SOURCE THAT CAPTAIN OF "OFELIA" SAID THAT HIS BRIDGE WAS NOT MANNED DURING THE ACTION, AND THAT HE EARLIER THOUGHT THAT HE WAS IN THE PRESENCE OF UNITS CONDUCTING GUNNERY EXERCISES. SOURCE ADDITIONALLY LEARNED THAT THE RUSSIAN SHIPS WERE DANISH BUILT AND THE BULGARIAN SHIPS WERE POLISH BUILT.

COMMENT: ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ IT WAS QUITE A BRAZEN ACT FOR MASSERA TO ISSUE SUCH A HARSH COMMAND TO SINK THE SHIP. SOURCE REVEALED THAT THE DESTROYER DIVISION COMMANDER WAS APPALLED WHEN HE RECEIVED THE ORDER. Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

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Sec. 3.3(b) (1) AFTER REGAINING HIS COMPOSURE, HE RECOMMENCED THE FIRING TO HIT "OFELIA"". HE DID NOT ALLOW THE USE OF EXPLOSIVE HEAD AMMUNITION. IF HE HAD, MASSERA'S ORDER TO SINK THE SHIP WOULD HAVVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED RAPIDLY. THIS MSG COORD W/EMBASSY.

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